

programs and program amendments submitted by the States must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR Parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

#### *National Environmental Policy Act*

No environmental impact statement is required for this rule since section 702(d) of SMCRA [30 U.S.C. 1292(d)] provides that agency decisions on proposed State regulatory program provisions do not constitute major Federal actions within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

#### *Paperwork Reduction Act*

This rule does not contain information collection requirements that require approval by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507 *et seq.*).

#### *Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The Department of the Interior has determined that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The State submittal which is the subject of this rule is based upon counterpart Federal regulations for which an economic analysis was prepared and certification made that such regulations would not have a significant economic effect upon a substantial number of small entities. Accordingly, this rule will ensure that existing requirements previously promulgated by OSM will be implemented by the State. In making the determination as to whether this rule would have a significant economic impact, the Department relied upon the data and assumptions for the counterpart Federal regulations.

#### *Unfunded Mandates*

This rule will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on any governmental entity or the private sector.

#### **List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 946**

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.

Dated: December 16, 1998.

**Allen D. Klein,**

*Regional Director, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

#### 30 CFR Part 946

[VA-114-FOR]

#### Virginia Regulatory Program

**AGENCY:** Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; public comment period and opportunity for public hearing.

**SUMMARY:** OSM is announcing receipt of a proposed amendment to the Virginia regulatory program (hereinafter referred to as the Virginia program) under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). The proposed amendment clarifies the State's interpretation of its regulations concerning the disposal of excess spoil. The amendment is intended to improve the operational efficiency of the Virginia program.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received by 4:00 p.m., on January 22, 1999. If requested, a public hearing on the proposed amendment will be held on January 19, 1999. Requests to speak at the hearing must be received by 4:00 p.m., on January 7, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and requests to speak at the hearing should be mailed or hand delivered to Mr. Robert A. Penn, Director, Big Stone Gap Field Office at the first address listed below.

Copies of the Virginia program, the proposed amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings, and all written comments received in response to this document will be available for public review at the addresses listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Each requestor may receive one free copy of the proposed amendment by contracting OSM's Big Stone Gap Field Office.

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Big Stone Gap Field Office, 1941 Neeley Road, Suite 201, Compartment 116, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219, Telephone: (703) 523-4303

or

Virginia Division of Mined Land Reclamation, P.O. Drawer 900, Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219, Telephone: (703) 523-8100.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Robert A. Penn, Director, Big Stone Gap Field Office, Telephone: (703) 523-4303.

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

### I. Background on the Virginia Program

On December 15, 1981, the Secretary of the Interior conditionally approved the Virginia program. Background information on the Virginia program, including the Secretary's findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval can be found in the December 15, 1981, **Federal Register** (46 FR 61085-61115). Subsequent actions concerning the conditions of approval and program amendments can be found at 30 CFR 946.12, 946.15, and 946.16.

### II. Discussion of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated November 24, 1998 (Administrative Record No. VA-961), the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) submitted a clarification to its interpretation of its regulations at 4 VAC 25-130-816/817.76 concerning the disposal of excess spoil.

The proposed amendment is as follows:

The Division of Mined Land Reclamation proposed to clarify the interpretation of 4 VAC 25-130-816.76. The regulation states that excess spoil may be placed on "another area under a permit issued pursuant to the Act, or on abandoned mine lands under contract for reclamation according to the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Guidelines and approved by the Division of Mines Land Reclamation." The Virginia Division of Mined Land Reclamation interprets this regulation to mean excess spoil from a permitted coal mining operation may be used by the Division of Mined Land Reclamation to reclaim a bond forfeiture site or an AML project site. Through any of the contracting procedures available to the agency, including negotiated, non-cost, or competitively bid contracts, the agency may cause the placement of excess spoil on the forfeiture or AML site in accordance with the provisions of a contract executed between the Division and a contractor. The spoil material removed from the permitted area will be demonstrated to be excess spoil and unnecessary for the achievement of approximate original contour within the permitted area.

The forfeiture or AML project must be:

1. Located in general proximity to the permit area;
  2. On the AML inventory list or bond forfeiture list; and
  3. Referenced in the permit plans, along with the demonstration that the spoil is excess and identified on the permit map.
- However, the forfeiture or AML site will not be included in the permit acreage; will not be subject to the requirements for permits, performance bonds; and will not delay or otherwise affect bond release on the permitted area.

In the event the contractor fails to perform the work specified in the "no-cost contract," the Division will invoke the appropriate

contract sanctions to cause completion of the contract terms. When the contractor and the mine operator happen to be one and the same, the contract will include an additional default provision. In this case, the contract will specify that the mine operator will revise the permit boundary to include the area upon which the excess spoil was placed pursuant to the "no-cost contract." The permit performance bond requirements will become applicable.

### III. Public Comment Procedures

In accordance with the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), OSM is now seeking comment on whether the amendments proposed by Virginia satisfy the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If the amendments are deemed adequate, they will become part of the Virginia program.

#### Written Comments

Written comments should be specific, pertain only to the issues proposed in this rulemaking, and include explanations in support of the commenter's recommendations. Comments received after the time indicated under **DATES** or at locations other than the Big Stone Gap Field Office will not necessarily be considered in the final rulemaking or included in the Administrative Record.

#### Public Hearing

Persons wishing to comment at the public hearing should contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** by close of business on January 7, 1999. If no one requests an opportunity to comment at a public hearing, the hearing will not be held.

Filing of a written statement at the time of the hearing is requested as it will greatly assist the transcriber. Submission of written statements in advance of the hearing will allow OSM officials to prepare adequate responses and appropriate questions.

The public hearing will continue on the specified date until all persons scheduled to comment have been heard. Persons in the audience who have not been scheduled to comment, and who wish to do so, will be heard following those scheduled. The hearing will end after all persons scheduled to comment and persons present in the audience who wish to comment have been heard.

#### Public Meeting

If only one person requests an opportunity to comment at a hearing, a public meeting, rather than a public hearing, may be held. Persons wishing to meet with OSM representatives to discuss the proposed amendments may request a meeting at the Big Stone Gap

Field Office by contacting the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. All such meetings will be open to the public and, if possible, notices of meeting will be posted in advance at the locations listed under **ADDRESSES**. A written summary of each public meeting will be made part of the Administrative Record.

Any disabled individual who has need for a special accommodation to attend a public hearing should contact the individual listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

### IV. Procedural Determinations

#### Executive Order 12866

This rule is exempted from review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review).

#### Executive Order 12988

The Department of the Interior has conducted the reviews required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform) and has determined that, to the extent allowed by law, this rule meets the applicable standards of subsections (a) and (b) of that section. However, these standards are not applicable to the actual language of State regulatory programs and program amendments since each such program is drafted and promulgated by a specific State, not by OSM. Under sections 503 and 505 of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1253 and 1255) and 30 CFR 730.11, 732.15 and 732.17(h)(10), decisions on proposed State regulatory programs and program amendments submitted by the States must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR Parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

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Dated: December 16, 1998.

**Allen D. Klein,**

*Regional Director, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Office of the Secretary

#### 31 CFR Part 1

#### Privacy Act; Implementation

**AGENCY:** Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, as amended, the Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) gives notice of a proposed amendment to exempt a new system of records, the IRS Audit Trail Lead Analysis System—Treasury/IRS 34.020, from certain provisions of the Privacy Act. The exemptions are intended to comply with the legal prohibitions against the disclosure of certain kinds of information and to protect certain information, about individuals, maintained in this system of records.